

2000 Annual Report Executive Summary

Accomack-Northampton Enterprise Community

The Port of Cape Charles Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park (STIP) led the way in implementing key elements of the EC Strategic Plan by receiving a Brownfields Showcase Community and Supplemental Technical Assistance award from the Environmental Protection Agency. During the year STIP moved the first tenant into its new incubator building.

The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission, the Bayview Citizens for Social Justice, and the New Road Community Development Group of Exmore received the 2000 HUD Best Practices Award of Excellence. The New Road Group was acclaimed as one of the "100 Best of the Best".

The national intermediary, the Development Training Institute of Baltimore, MD, partnered with five grass-roots organizations to successfully secure one of the first USDA Rural Community Development Initiative awards, to build low-wealth organizational capacity within the Accomack-Northampton Enterprise Community.

STAR Transit continued to provide one of the nations most successful rural public transportation system. STAR provides low-cost bus service from the Eastern Shore to Hampton Roads on the mainland making it economically feasible to live on the Eastern Shore and commute to a job or attend college in Hampton Roads.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Partnership continued to receive support from both the state and the Center for Innovative Technology for development of its Destination Resort, Business Center, Sustainable Wastewater System, Space Flight Academy, Networked Future, and Seafood Market projects.

The Economic Development Commission secured state and Rural Business Enterprise Grant funds and attracted a fiberglass boat building company.

The lead entity, VESEHC, continued to work with USDA Rural Development and local banks in the Rural Home Loan Partnership to finance five first-time homeowners.

The low-wealth communities of Bayview, New Road, Cape Charles, District One, Locust Mount, and Savagetown/Cats Bridge continued to plan and implement their community revitalization programs. The New Road community project dedicated its deep well and sewage treatment systems that will provide indoor plumbing and toilets for the first time to over ninety households.

After years of work the Eastern Shore Public Service Authority was authorized by local governments to plan and implement the water and waste water needs of residents and businesses in the area.

Accomack and Northampton County public schools continued to implement multicultural and alternative education programs for at-risk children. The Northampton County school system began utilizing funding under the Qualified Zone Academy Bond Program. One of the most innovative programs was the formation of a Musical Instruments Assistance Fund for Northampton County Middle School children whose families are unable to obtain music instruments because of lack of money or credit.

Led by the Northampton Chapter of the NAACP, a collaborative of local organizations, agencies, and local governments continued to hold multiple community meetings to address racism and to promote community unity.

For the year 1994, unemployment rates for Accomack and Northampton Counties were 8.0% and 6.6% respectively. In November of 1998, the unemployment rates were 6.5% and 5.2% respectively; for the year 1999 the unemployment rates were 6.4% and 4.5% respectively; and for December 2000 the unemployment rates were 4.3% and 3.1% respectively. Thus it can be seen that the Empowerment Program has been good for the economic vitality of the Eastern Shore of Virginia.